



Office of the Secretary of Higher Education

Considerations for Postsecondary Commencement Ceremonies

Last Updated: June 4, 2021

The decision to host commencement and related activities is ultimately up to institutions, which must ensure their plans comply with state-mandated requirements for indoor and outdoor gatherings and other public health measures that may be in place at the time of the event. For the most up-to-date COVID-19 information, visit New Jersey's [COVID-19 Information Hub](#).

Requirements and considerations for ceremonies:

- For in-person ceremonies, **institutions must limit the number of attendees based on state gathering rules effective on the date of the ceremony.**
 - Effective June 4, 2021, there is no longer a numerical limit on indoor gatherings, regardless of the size of the venue. There is also currently no limit on outdoor gatherings. For the most up-to-date indoor and outdoor gathering limits, visit: <https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/reopening-guidance-and-restrictions/how-can-people-safely-get-together-what-are-the-limits-for-indoor-and-outdoor-gatherings>.
 - Indoor venues, regardless of size, may operate at full capacity starting June 4. Outdoor venues are also currently permitted to operate at full capacity.
 - Institutions are strongly encouraged to continue to utilize best practices for mitigating COVID, including social distancing to the extent practicable.
- Institutions are expected to **prioritize the health and safety** of students, staff, faculty, visitors, and other community members, including abiding by the most current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance and continuing to monitor local and state health information. .
- Institutions may want to consider dividing into smaller ceremonies held throughout the day or over the span of several days to limit crowds, allow for cleaning in between ceremonies, and to allow the attendees to leave the venue before the next group arrives.
- Effective Friday, May 28, 2021, individuals in indoor public spaces are not required to wear masks, however, institutions are strongly encouraged to continue to implement health and safety protocols, such as having a mask policy.
 - Per CDC guidance, individuals who are not fully vaccinated - defined as two weeks after receiving the second shot of a two-dose vaccination or two weeks after receiving a single-dose vaccination - are strongly encouraged to continue masking and social distancing.

- Institutions may choose to adopt stricter COVID-19 event requirements, such as with mask-wearing or social distancing where otherwise consistent with federal and state law.
- Institutions should provide approved sanitization materials for employees, students, and visitors.
- As always, any event must **be inclusive and accessible for all** students and families.